

anti-lynching legislation despite several attempts. Even as seven Presidents called for anti-lynching legislation, and the House three times passed such bills, the Senate has steadfastly refused to act.

At least 4,749 people were reported lynched between 1881 and 1964, with the vast majority of the victims being African-American. Shockingly, 99 percent of the perpetrators of these horrible acts escaped punishment from State or local authorities.

My State was one of only four or five States that did not have a lynching during that time. It wasn't just one or two States. It was every State in the Union, every State of the then-48 States with the exception of only four or five.

Even though my State did not have any, I cosponsored this resolution because I believe an apology is in order. I have cosponsored this resolution because an apology is surely in order, and I believe Senator LANDRIEU deserves great credit for bringing this important issue to the Senate's attention.

This public act of contrition is an important gesture today to take responsibility for the civil rights misdeeds of the past. But it is also an opportunity for Congress to show the country that we will not tolerate similar offenses. As we pass this resolution, it is fitting to carry this principle to the present and act in kind to prevent civil rights and human rights abuses occurring now in this country and around the world.

As we pass this resolution, we should also recognize that it is long past the time to pass the Local Law Enforcement Enhancement Act, which would strengthen and extend our Federal hate crimes law. The Senate has repeatedly passed this bill, with 65 votes in the last Congress. The Republican leadership in the House, with the acquiescence of the Bush White House, has killed it. It is fitting that we apologize for past inaction, but that does not obviate the need to solve today's problems.

By the same token, we should reauthorize the Voting Rights Act in this Congress and not wait for 2007. We need to ensure that this law, one of the most important bills of the 20th century, remains in effect to safeguard the fundamental right of all citizens to participate fully in our democracy.

We should also remember the leading role this country played in drafting the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which was modeled on our own Bill of Rights. As the country that, especially since the Second World War, has been looked to around the world as a beacon of hope for victims of arbitrary arrest, torture, and the denial of fundamental freedoms, we need to set a far better example than we are today. The atrocities and dehumanizing mistreatment that have occurred in U.S. military detention facilities in Afghanistan, Iraq and Guantanamo, are eerily reminiscent of some of the despicable

acts described in this resolution. In addition, the continued assistance the administration is providing to foreign security forces that violate human rights, directly contradict the message we are trying to send with this resolution. We should not be satisfied with long overdue apologies. There are serious human rights problems that we need to address today.

A few years ago, I had the opportunity to examine the book "Without Sanctuary: Lynching Photography in America," which is referred to in this resolution. The haunting photographs in this book make plain the evil that lurked in this Nation not very long ago, and make it impossible to accept the fact that the individuals and mobs that committed these heinous acts by and large suffered no consequences. This resolution deserves our immediate approval, and I hope it provides some comfort to the descendants of the victims of these horrible crimes.

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, it is every citizen's duty to know American history. One fact we must reckon with is that our experiment in self-government began in a compromise with the existence of slavery. As the American experiment went forward, protections granted to slavery in the Constitution—a document that never explicitly mentioned slavery—were dismantled. The cost was great: Brother fought against brother in the Civil War, largely over whether "the peculiar institution" would be allowed to thrive in the United States. When, at the end of that terrible conflict, the 13th amendment was put in the Constitution, slavery was abolished.

Yet while a pernicious institution was now, thankfully, illegal, its aftereffects were still felt in the former slave States. Postwar reconstruction was supposed to restore the natural and the civil rights of the former slaves and their descendants; but State and local authorities did not enforce those rights. The lynching of African Americans, and other forms of persecution, would persist into the 20th century, to the shame of every decent citizen.

Candidly facing this history is important. We must not forget the wrongs of the past—nor that we have had leaders willing to come forward and stand against those wrongs. From the Continental Congress passing the Northwest Ordinance of 1787, which banned slavery in the region northwest of the Ohio River, to the words and deeds of Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln, to the civil rights movement of the 1960s, brave men and women reaffirmed for all of us the principles of human equality and consent of the governed on which our Nation was founded.

Lincoln declared: "Those who deny freedom to others deserve it not for themselves, and under a just God, cannot long retain it."

I support Senate Resolution 39 in the name of honesty and national unity. As Senators representing Americans of all colors and creeds, we ought to give due

recognition to past injustices. Even more importantly, we ought to live today by Lincoln's dictum. We must make sure our laws and our practices always reflect our belief in individual worth and equality under the law. This belief held in common is what has helped Americans—whatever their race, religion, or background—to succeed.

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, the Senate has accomplished some wonderful things for this country. But sometimes this body makes grave mistakes. Today, by passing the resolution apologizing to the victims of lynching, we acknowledge one of the gravest. The use of the filibuster and other dilatory tactics to prevent the enactment of a law criminalizing lynching is among the darkest chapters in the history of the U.S. Senate. This resolution is a small but important step toward helping us come to terms with the Senate's disgraceful failure over a period of many years, at the beginning of this century, to protect our citizens. I congratulate Senators LANDRIEU and ALLEN for their work to bring this resolution before the Senate.

There are few crimes as despicable and contrary to the rule of law as lynching. The practice was born of hatred, racial or otherwise, and disdain for our criminal justice institutions. Unfortunately, lynching occurred throughout the United States, with cases documented in all but four states. From 1881 to 1964, there were 4,749 recorded victims of lynching. Of these victims, 3,452 were African Americans. Worse still, in nearly all cases of lynching before 1968, local and state law enforcement officials failed to investigate or prosecute the perpetrators.

An anti-lynching law would have allowed Federal prosecutors to bring the perpetrators of lynching to justice. On three occasions, the House passed anti-lynching bills, but each time a small group of Senators filibustered the proposals in the Senate.

Although a resolution cannot make up for the terrible injustice perpetrated against the victims of lynching and their families, this resolution is, at least, a positive step toward recognizing the Senate's past mistakes. There is much more that the Senate must do to address continuing racial injustice in this country. But this resolution is a worthy effort. I am proud to support it, and I am pleased that the Senate will pass it tonight.

Mrs. LINCOLN. Mr. President. I rise today in support of Senate Resolution 39.

This resolution acknowledges a dark period in the history of our Nation and the history of this institution. It was a time of racial intolerance, hatred and violence, that took the lives of 4,742 people, mostly African Americans, between 1882 and 1968. It was also a time when this body failed to fulfill its moral and constitutional responsibilities to pass significant legislation